

Physical Therapist Assistants

PHYSICAL THERAPIST ASSISTANTS work under the direction of physical therapists to assist and administer treatment to patients. Typical duties include giving heat, light, and ultrasound treatments. Physical Therapist Assistants also give patients massages and exercises that help heal muscles, nerves, bones, and joints. They teach and encourage patients to learn or improve necessary activities such as walking, climbing, and general mobility. Patients are watched during treatment, and their reactions and progress are recorded and reported to therapists by the Assistants. They fit patients for and teach them to use corrective equipment such as braces or artificial arms and legs or supportive devices such as wheelchairs. They also observe the patients' progress, instruct, and motivate them during treatment.

Requirements

- ▲ Completion of an associate degree in physical therapy assisting from an accredited school.
- ▲ Licensed by the Physical Therapy Board of California.
- ▲ Good written and oral communication skills.
- ▲ Interest in working with, teaching, and providing a service to others.
- ▲ Fingerprint clearance is required.

Wages

- ▲ Physical Therapist Assistants
Median hourly wage: \$24.36
- ▲ Average annual wage: \$49,884

Source: Occupational Employment Survey of Employers 2006 by EDD/LMID.

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Job Outlook

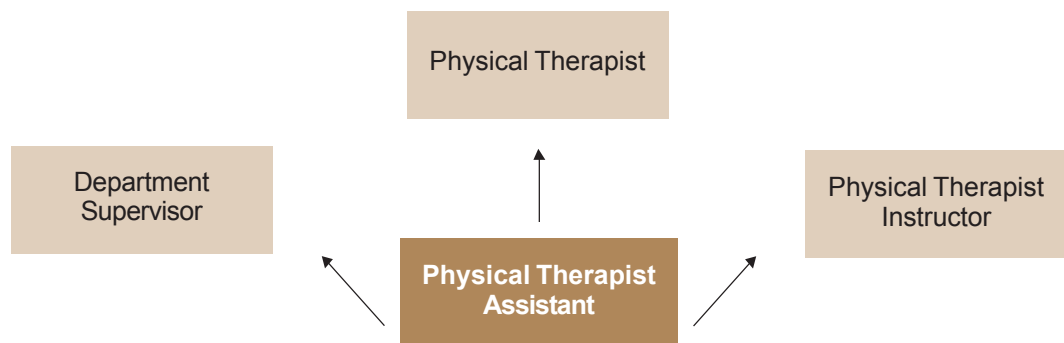
- ▲ Estimated number of Physical Therapist Assistants in 2004: 3,900
- ▲ Estimated number of Physical Therapist Assistants in 2014: 5,400
- ▲ Estimated annual job openings: 220

Source: Occupational Projections, EDD/LMID.

Sources of Information

- ▲ Physical Therapy Board
(916) 561-8200
www.ptb.ca.gov
- ▲ American Physical Therapy Association
(703) 684-2782
www.apta.org
- ▲ *California Occupational Guide*, No. 451
Physical Therapy Aides and Assistants

Possible Career Paths



The skills, knowledge, and abilities acquired for the primary occupation provide a solid foundation for further growth in health career occupations. Additional education or training is often required.